

Terminal Disclaimer

1. The terminal disclaimer filed on 7/29/08 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of US Patent 6663588 has been reviewed and is accepted. The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

Allowable Subject Matter

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The subject matter of the independent claims could not be found and was not suggested by the prior art of record. The subject matter not found is the combination of elements including a control mechanism and a counterforce mechanism to reduce a deflection force needed to continue to deflect a shaft, the counterforce mechanism applying a biasing force to the control mechanism in a direction opposite to the return force once the control mechanism is moved from a neutral position in which the shaft is in a straightened position, the biasing force being about equal to the return force, was not found in the prior art search.

Also not found is the combination of elements including a counterforce mechanism including a rotatable bell crank lever coupled to the biasing element and the slider such that linear displacement of the slider causes the bell crank lever to rotate in a selected direction, in combination with the features of the invention substantially as claimed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LAURA A. BOUCHELLE whose telephone number is (571)272-2125. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8-4.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nicholas Lucchesi can be reached on 517-272-4977. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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